

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-02 ICA-20 H-02 HA-05

AID-05 /086 W

-----016704 041329Z /43

R 031855Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7348

INFO AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

UNCLAS BRASILIA 3523

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (SAYRE, ROBERT), BR

SUBJECT: PRESS REACTION TO AMBASSADOR SAYRE'S CONFIRMATION

1. THE BRASILIA, RIO AND SAO PAULO PRESS HAS REPORTED
EXTENSIVELY ON THE

SENATE'S CONFIRMATION OF AMBASSADOR SAYRE, FOCUSING LARGELY ON
SENATOR HELM'S DISTORTED AND HYPERBOLIC ACCUSATIONS
(WHICH WERE REPORTED EARLIER DURING THE CANAL TREATY
DEBATE) AND SPECULATING ABOUT THE AMBASSADOR'S FUTURE
RELATIONS WITH THE GOB IN THE WAKE OF HIS DELAYED
CONFIRMATION. WHILE MOST PAPERS HAVE REPORTED FROM WIRE SERVICE ACCOU
NTS
OF THE ACCUSATIONS MADE BY SENATOR HELMS, THEY ALSO
HAVE REPORTED SENATOR SPARKMAN'S DEFENSE OF AMBASSADOR
SAYRE'S NOMINATION, AND FOLHA DE SAO PAULO IN A FRONT PAGE
PIECE DEFENDED AMBASSADOR SAYRE AS "A VICTIM OF SORDID
INTRIGUES BY OPPONENTS OF THE PANAMA CANAL TREATY."

2. SENATOR HELM'S CLAIM THAT US-BRAZILIAN RELATIONS
HAVE BEEN STRAINED BECAUSE OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S "SELECTIVE POLICY
OF HUMAN RIGHTS" WAS REPORTED
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IN TANDEM WITH HIS PERSONAL ATTACK ON AMBASSADOR
SAYRE. PRESS HAS WIDELY QUOTED HELMS AS SAYING THAT
THE NEXT AMBASSADOR TO BRAZIL MUST BE A MAN OF
"EXTRAORDINARY TACT AND UNASSAILABLE REPUTATION",
ADDING "I AM VERY SORRY TO SAY THAT AMBASSADOR
SAYRE IS NOT A PERSON WITH THESE CHARACTERISTICS".

3. IN AN ANALYTICAL PIECE FROM BRASILIA, O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO SOUGHT TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF AMBASSADOR SAYRE'S DELAYED CONFIRMATION ON HIS RELATIONS WITH THE GOB. O ESTADO CLAIMED THAT UNSPECIFIED "DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES" ARE ARGUING THAT AMBASSADOR SAYRE "WILL NEED TO BE EXTREMELY CAUTIOUS AND TACTFUL TO OVERCOME A CERTAIN NEGATIVE PREDISPOSITION BY THE BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT, WHICH WOULD HAVE PREFERRED A NAME LESS CONTROVERSIAL THAT THAT OF SAYRE". O ESTADO CALLED AMBASSADOR SAYRE A "SPECIALIST IN STRONG GOVERNMENTS, ALTHOUGH NORTH AMERICAN DIPLOMACY DENIES THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TRAINS DIPLOMATS TO SPECIALIZE IN SERVING IN DICTATORIAL REGIMES". NOTING AMBASSADOR SAYRE'S RECORD OF LONG SERVICE IN LATIN AMERICA, "A CONTINENT WHICH HAS DICTATORSHIP AS A CHARACTERISTIC OF ITS POLITICAL REGIMES", O ESTADO CONCLUDED THAT THE AMBASSADOR WILL BE ABLE TO WORK WITH BRAZILIAN MILITARY OFFICIALS WITHOUT OFFENDING THEIR SENSIBILITIES.

4. THE ONLY PAPER TO PRINT AN INTERVIEW WITH THE AMBASSADOR WAS JORNAL DO BRASIL, WHOSE WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT N.D. SPINOLA REPORTED ON A MEETING WITH HIM SHORTLY AFTER HIS CONFIRMATION. SPINOLA SAID AMBASSADOR SAYRE WOULD BRING A "CONCRETE AGENDA" TO BRASILIA, THAT HE RECOGNIZED "THERE ARE SOME DIFFICULTIES" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, BUT THAT

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THEIR RESOLUTION HAS "BECOME MUCH EASIER THANKS TO THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRESIDENT GEISEL".

5. THE PRESS HAS GENERALLY REPORTED THAT AMBASSADOR SAYRE WILL BE ARRIVING IN BRASILIA DURING THE SECOND HALF OF MAY, AND THAT HE HAS BEEN MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH THE EMBASSY BY TELEPHONE SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK.

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